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their Prayers." In this manuscript, as also in those from which Ludolph prepared his excellent edition of the Ethiopic Psalms, contains the Prayer of Moses (Ex. xv.); the Second Prayer of Moses (Deut. xxxii.); the Third Prayer of Moses (continuation of second, from v. 22 on); Prayer of Hannah for Samuel (1 Sam. ii.); Prayer of Hezekiah, the king of the Jews (Isa. xxxviii. 10 sqq.); Prayer of Manasseh, a piece from the Apocrypha; the Prayer of the Prophet Jonah (Jon. ii.); the Prayer of Azariah, from the Apocrypha; the Prayer of the three Children, also Apocrypha; a Blessing, from the same source; the Prayer of the Prophet Habakkuk (Hab. iii.); the Prayer of Isaiah the Prophet (Isa. xxvi.); the Prayer of Mary (Lk. i.); the Prayer of Zacharias (Lk. i.); the Prayer of Simeon (Lk. ii.); the whole of Canticles. Ludolph especially remarks (Psalter, p. 18), that these additions were found in every manuscript of the Ethiopic Psalter of which he had any knowledge.

But our manuscript contains even more. The last forty-one pages are taken up by a typically Ethiopic panegyric on the Virgin Mary. It is written in the same hand as the first part and has undergone the same revision, and accordingly could not be merely by accident bound together with the Psalter. Its object could be only edification, although it seems to be arranged also for a responsive service. It differs externally from the Psalter in being written in three columns on each page, while the latter is in only one. The manuscript itself is a good one. It was, however, not such originally. A second has gone over every word and has carefully revised the whole. Sometimes whole words and even lines have been erased and a better text inserted; at other places a missing letter has been added or a superfluous letter removed. Only now and then has an error escaped the corrector. This makes the manuscript rather a valuable one, and one that can be used to advantage should a new edition of the Ethiopic Psalms be needed. The evidences that it is an old manuscript are at hand. The endless changes and exchanges in the gutturals, which are characteristic of later manuscripts, are wanting to a marked degree; in a great majority of cases the guttural demanded by the etymology of the word is retained. The vowels, too, are carefully written, only at times does the short *a* usurp the place of the long *a*, especially in the plural, and only occasionally is the sixth or fundamental form of the consonant used for some other form.

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An Arabic Coin.—Recently Mr. Charles G. Nicholson, the Baltimore banker, quite well known as a numismatist, came to me with a beautifully inscribed large gold coin, for which he had not been able to obtain any decipherment. I told Mr. Nicholson that the inscription was in early interlaced Arabic, and extremely difficult to resolve, but if he would leave the coin for study, I would promise to obtain him the solution.

Lately, I had been reading Arabic with Prof. Nahoum Moucarzel, a native Libanian, late professor at the Jesuit university in Syria (Beyrouth) and at the Jesuit college in Cairo, Egypt, to whom I proposed the problem. The gentleman answered that he could not make out the inscription, as it was in the early interlaced Arabic and very difficult to translate. I suggested to him the word "Allah," God, which he recognized, and the matter ended there for the time. A few days later I said to the gentleman, "Come, we must make out the inscription of this coin, no matter how much time or trouble it takes. We cannot let a difficulty overcome us." We set to work.

Tentative results were at first obtained, and finally the complete solution, thanks to his very perfect knowledge, not merely of modern Arabic, but of the more perfect forms of literary Arabic. The coin is larger than a silver shilling or twenty-five cent piece, round, but coming to a point at one end. The inscription on either side is included in a square of bars with dots. Outside the square runs the date and the name of the Caliph.

The plate gives the transcription into modern Arabic letters. Holding the



point in the left hand with the Arabic letters in proper position, the translation runs thus. On one side, read: "To God, who created the greatest of his dear friends on earth, Mahomet. The Caliphate." On the other: "There is no other God but God, and Mahomet is his Prophet. 981. 212. Caliphate of Abdalla." The coin would then be of the year 827 of the Christian era. The dates are given in numbers of the Hegira. The year 622 of the Christian era was the beginning of the Hegira. Counting the months at 11-12, we obtain the dates corresponding as follows:

Number of the coin, 981; date of coinage, 212 A. H., 827 A. D.; beginning of Caliphate of Abdalla, 198 A. H., 813 A. D.; end of reign of Abdalla, 218 A. H., 833 A. D.; year of the Hegira, 198 to 218, reign of Abdalla; Christian year, 813 to 833, reign of Abdallah.

The monarch spoken of on this coin is Abdalla, son of the great Haroun al Rachid of Arabian Nights' fame. Abdalla followed the footsteps of his ancestors in the love of the arts and sciences. In his youth he studied literature and jurisprudence. As he grew older he studied philosophy and astronomy.

His reign was troubled by the revolt of his brother Amine against him and also of his uncle Abraham, son of the Mahdi, to whom Abdalla shows clemency and exceeding generosity. He warred against many princes and finally died in war. His subjects followed him in the study of the sciences. He translated Euclid, gathered around him the savants of his time and encouraged all who had talent. He wished to conquer by knowledge rather than by the sword, and often said one must not follow the example of the Chinese and the Turks who know only how to do manual labor. But as man ought to be worthy of his creation in the likeness of God, and as the soul is very noble, we must elevate ourselves by the study of philosophy and science to the height of the soul, and not lower ourselves to the earth in obeying the inclinations of the body. The Turks were the mamelukes or slaves of these caliphes of the Abassides. After their revolts the Turks became the conquerors, and the Arabians are now the subjects of the Turks.

J. F. X. O'CONOR, S. J.

The Use of the Tenses in Hebrew Narrative.—In *HEBRAICA*, July and October, 1886, were published some notes of mine on the above subject, including a classified table of the occurrences of the different tenses in the Hexateuch. I should now like to put before the readers of *HEBRAICA* a similar table, embracing, with the exception of a few isolated paragraphs, all the narrative portions of the Hebrew Old Testament. My object in the former and present notes is simply to state and classify a limited group of facts, and in a very humble way to illustrate the present theory and nomenclature, not to assail them. I should have thought that this was evident from the general tenor of the notes. But Prof. Curtiss in the 1887 volume of "Current Discussions in Theology" credits me with setting "to work to defend the old terminology of 'past and future' by an analysis of the Pentateuch and Joshua." I am not sufficiently presumptuous to enter upon this formidable undertaking, and if I did I should not depend on so absurdly inadequate a method. I felt then and still feel that the modern theory is often stated in works of great authority and wide use in a way that misleads the student as to the actual usage of the tense, and I believe that it may be well to call attention to the actual facts of the case.